United Nations ST/IC/2007/24

Secretariat

29 June 2007

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **2007 competitive examination for English proofreaders/copy preparers/production editors**

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members of the Secretariat at the P-3 level and below who wish to take the competitive examination for English proofreaders/copy preparers/production editors in 2007, in accordance with the provisions of ST/AI/1998/7 and ST/AI/2000/1, as amended by ST/AI/2003/1.

2. A competitive examination for English copy preparers/proofreaders/production editors will be held tentatively on **15 October 2007** in New York, Geneva and other locations according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked for the examination. The purpose of this examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for English proofreaders/copy preparers/production editors at United Nations Headquarters in New York and at other duty stations in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America will be filled. When vacancies occur in a service, successful candidates will be recruited from the roster for that service, subject to the requirements in terms of expertise and language combinations.

3. The examination is open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements, as well as to qualified external applicants. Staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations as well as members whose service is limited to a particular organ, fund or programme of the United Nations or to special missions are considered external candidates for the purpose of this examination. Such candidates, if successful in the examination, will be offered a new appointment with the United Nations subject to normal United Nations recruitment procedures and standards. Staff members who are selected for inclusion in the roster will be assigned to fill vacancies as they occur in the language services in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Bangkok and Santiago. Assignments are subject to rotation (mobility). English proofreaders/copy preparers/production editors may thereafter be called upon to serve at other duty stations according to the needs of the Organization. Successful

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 December 2007.

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candidates are expected to serve **a minimum of five years** in a language post. The assignment of staff members of the United Nations who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 14 to 17 below.

4. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have English as their main language;[1]

(b) Have a perfect command of English and an excellent knowledge of French and one of the other official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish). The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates' claims to knowledge of official languages must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages should have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Candidates who have not attended the United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages by attaching to their application a photocopy of a diploma or a certificate from a language school or a brief explanation of how they acquired their knowledge of the languages claimed. Staff members are advised to submit photocopies, not originals, of such documentation;

(c) Hold at least a first-level three-year degree or an equivalent qualification from a university or institution of equivalent status at which English is the principal language of instruction;

(d) Have relevant experience in the printing/publishing industry.

Applicants are required to be able to use computer workstations. Word-processing knowledge is a requirement. Desktop publishing knowledge is an advantage.

5. In order to meet the Organization's need to recruit staff for language posts who will serve for a reasonable period of time before reaching retirement age, staff members who do not serve on 100-series appointments and who are over the age of 56 by the deadline for submission of applications, **13 August 2007**, will not be eligible to sit for the examination. There is no age limit for full-time staff members serving on 100-series appointments.

6. The requirement for a university degree or its equivalent mentioned in paragraph 4 (c) may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have appropriate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status at which the principal language of instruction is English, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

7. All applicants should submit with their applications a one-page essay in English, explaining why they wish to work as a proofreader/copy preparer/production editor. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. In instances where a large number of applications are received, the

[1] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to English as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

Board reserves the right to admit to the examination only the most qualified candidates based on a review of the qualifications that are over and above the minimum criteria set out in paragraph 4. Convoked candidates will be required to submit evidence of degrees, knowledge of languages and/or relevant experience prior to the interview. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. **The Board's decisions are final**.

8. The examination will consist of two parts:

(a) an eliminatory written examination on proofreading, copy preparation and language knowledge;

(b) a computer test on desktop publishing skills and knowledge of printing.

9. The written examination will consist of the following four papers:

(a) Copy-editing and copy preparation of a text intended for typesetting (2 hours and 15 minutes);

(b) English language aptitude test (45 minutes);

(c) Language aptitude test in the two additional languages (1 hour);

(d) Proofreading against manuscript (2 hours).

10. The use of a dictionary or any other reference material is **not** permitted during the examination. Graphic arts rulers are allowed.

11. On the basis of the results obtained in the written examination, the Board of Examiners will invite successful candidates to take a computer test on desktop publishing skills and knowledge of printing, which will normally take place several weeks after the written component of the examination. The computer test will consist of:

(a) Formatting of text and tables based on a marked-up manuscript and a given electronic template (layout specifications and style sheet) using Adobe InDesign CS2. Placement of graphics and/or images is not required (2 hours);

(b) Questionnaire on printing knowledge (30 minutes).

12. After the computer test, the Board will interview the candidate(s) to assess professional experience, knowledge of the United Nations and ability to work as a member of a team. Both the computer test and the interview are an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates at this stage should not assume that they will be automatically offered an appointment.

13. On the basis of the overall results of the examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates for inclusion in the roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final decision in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are **not** subject to appeal. The Board **does not** release individual results.

14. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as English proofreaders/copy preparers/production editors for a trial period of two years. Staff members below the P-2 level or who are in the General Service category will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 levels will be assigned at their respective levels.

15. Successful candidates who receive an offer of appointment are strongly encouraged to accept it, as declining may affect their prospects of receiving a subsequent offer.

16. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Office of Human Resources Management may be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who complete the trial period successfully will be confirmed in their functions at the P-3 level. Staff members on fixed-term appointment will be eligible to be considered for permanent appointment subject to the requirements of the staff rules in force. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

17. In accordance with the needs of the service/section, successful candidates may be called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

18. Staff members applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it together with a copy of the P.11 or PHP form and the essay mentioned in paragraph 7, not later than **13 August 2007**, to:

2007 competitive examination for English proofreaders/copy preparers/
production editors
Examinations and Tests Section
Division for Organizational Development
Office of Human Resources Management
Room S-2575
United Nations Secretariat
New York, N.Y. 10017
Fax No.: (1-212) 963 3683
E-mail: OHRM_exam@un.org

Applications received after the above deadline will not be considered. To the extent possible, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications early. Applications may be sent by e-mail, fax or mail. Incomplete applications, including those without the essay, will **not** be considered.

19. In order to ensure receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, those staff members are requested to return their applications to the Division for Organizational Development of the Office of Human Resources Management through the Chief Administrative Officer or Director of the United Nations Information Centre of their respective duty stations by **13 August 2007**, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Examinations and Tests Section.

Application (for staff members of the United Nations Secretariat only)

2007 competitive examination for English proofreaders/copy preparers/production editors

Index No. ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Last name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Category ☐☐ Level ☐☐

First name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Male ☐ Female ☐

Date of entry on duty Month ☐☐ Year ☐☐☐☐

Type of contract _____ Expiration date _____

Department/office _____ Duty station _____

Room No. _____ Tel. extension _____ Fax extension _____ E-mail _____

Have you taken this examination before? Yes ☐ Year ☐☐☐☐ No ☐

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes ☐ Year ☐☐☐☐ No ☐

If yes, which examination(s)? _____

What is your main language?[a] ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

[a] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to English as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

Please complete an up-to-date P.11 or PHP form and attach it to this application. Describe your educational background and work experience (giving dates and length of time) in the areas of proofreading, copy preparation and production editing, if any. Also include any relevant computer software or program used. Applications submitted without a P.11 or PHP form or without the one-page essay in English mentioned in paragraph 7 will NOT be considered.

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date _____ Signature _____

I have read information circular ST/IC/2007/24 and I understand that, if I am successful in the 2007 competitive examination for English proofreaders/copy preparers/production editors and am recommended for inclusion in the roster, my appointment will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 14 to 17 of that circular.

Date _____ Signature _____